

Council Of Energy Resource Tribes

5660 So. Syracuse Circle • Plaza North
Suite 206 • Englewood, Colorado 80110

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8 August 1980

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Mr. Harry Early
Governor
Pueblo of Laguna Council
Box 194
Old Laguna, NM 87026

Dear Governor Early:

Please find enclosed a draft of a letter to Anaconda regarding reclamation. This letter is intended to open up a dialogue with Anaconda and ARCO on:

- the urgency of moving the reclamation program forward
- the use of the reclamation program to help solve the employment problem, and
- the potential for the Pueblo to convert the reclamation program into viable enterprises.

Someone from the CERT staff who has been working on Laguna projects would be available to meet with you, any staff members you designate, and your attorneys at your earliest convenience. After discussing the letter and reaching agreement, we feel it is important to send it out as soon as possible. By entering into a dialogue established before the reclamation plan is issued, the Pueblo may be able to influence the content of the plan. If not, then at least a mechanism for discussing the plan will have already been established.

I will call soon to find out when a meeting could be set up to discuss the draft letter to Anaconda. I will see to it that one of our senior staff members will attend.

Very truly yours,

Executive Director:

Ed Gabriel

Theodore Reynolds Smith
Managing Director
Technical Assistance Center

TRS/jvm

cc: Bernard Kayate
Ron Solomon
Les Taylor

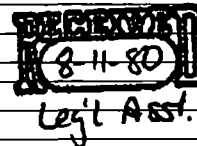
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DRAFT LETTER to Ralph Cox, President of Anaconda
from Governor Early, Pueblo of Laguna

The imminent shutdown of the Jackpile surface mining operations will cause hardship in many quarters. It will entail a loss of employment and wages for many workers and a loss of revenue for the Pueblo of Laguna. While recognizing these prospective losses, we also see this as a challenging opportunity for a collaborative effort to restore the mined-out area and to find new productive activities by which the Laguna workers and the Pueblo government can maintain their livelihood.

The recent decision by Anaconda to accelerate the phase-out of open pit operations has greatly complicated the problem. It means that the Laguna workers are scheduled to be laid off much sooner than expected and before they or the Laguna leadership have had much opportunity to explore alternative employment prospects. We are now moving ahead as rapidly as possible, with cooperation from CERT and others, to investigate such possibilities. However, other uranium operations in the area are also shutting down, making the short-term prospects poor at best.

The other serious consequence of the accelerated phase out is that we do not yet have an agreed upon reclamation program that could shift into high gear and provide continuing employment for a substantial portion of the workers released from the mining operations. Such work would understandably be only for a few years, but it would give some critical time needed to develop other, longer term employment possibilities. Also, if appropriately conceived and managed, this work could incorporate a phased transition

of workers, managers, and equipment into Pueblo-owned or private enterprises that could carry on similar types of work in the surrounding area.

We understand that you are working on a revised reclamation plan and trust that it will be responsive to the environmental issues already raised in my June 9 letter. We also urge that the plan provide maximum employment opportunities for Laguna workers over the next few years. Finally, we hope that the plan will be made available in the near future and that it will provide a basis for early agreement so that the work can proceed. If the plan is satisfactory, it might obviate the need for an environmental impact statement (EIS) that could further delay the work, cause more unemployment and increase the cost. If done poorly, reclamation will be a disaster for the Laguna people. It may also cause other tribes to question Anaconda's and ARCO's commitment to reclamation and environmental protection. If done properly, the phase out of the Jackpile mine could serve as a model for other mines and other tribes which will face this problem in the future.

While awaiting completion of the reclamation plan, it might prove helpful to both parties to discuss employment and other related aspects of reclamation and ways in which the reclamation process might facilitate the development of local enterprise. I look forward to hearing from you at the earliest possible date so we can move forward with the resolution of these issues.

cc: R. D. Lynn, General Manager, Jackpile Mine, (P.O. Box 638, Grants, NM)--do not include addresses in cc

Robert O. Anderson, Chairman of the Board, ARCO